

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of storing usage information in an ink jet printer, said method comprising the steps of:
 - storing low priority usage information in a first memory field;
 - storing first high priority usage information in a second memory field; and
 - 5 storing second high priority usage information in a third memory field, said second high priority usage information being substantially identical to said first high priority usage information.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein each of said first memory field, said second memory field and said third memory field can be both read and written to.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein if power is lost to the printer while writing to one of said second memory field and said third memory field, said information in the other of said second memory field and said third memory field is not corrupted.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said first high priority usage information and said second high priority usage information each include at least one of ink usage and print head life usage.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said low priority usage information includes at least one of a number of wet-wipes performed and a last ink-float read.
6. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of storing read-only information in a fourth memory field.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein said read-only information is determined at a time of manufacture of the printer.
8. The method of claim 6, wherein said read-only information includes at least one of starting ink, ink drop volume, and fire energy information.
9. The method of claim 6, comprising the further step of storing at least one checksum byte associated with at said fourth memory field.
10. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of storing at least one checksum byte associated with at least one of said first memory field, said second memory field and said third memory field.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein data stored in said at least one checksum byte is dependent upon at least one of said low priority usage information, said first high priority usage information and said second high priority usage information.

12. The method of claim 11, comprising the further step of using said at least one checksum byte to determine whether at least one of said low priority usage information, said first high priority usage information and said second high priority usage information is valid when the printer powers up.

13. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of using said second high priority usage information in lieu of said first high priority usage information if said first high priority usage information is corrupted.

14. The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of providing at least one non-volatile memory module containing said first memory field, said second memory field and said third memory field.

15. The method of claim 14, comprising the further step of authenticating said at least one non-volatile memory module upon power-up of the printer.

16. An ink jet printer, comprising a memory module including:

a first field containing low priority usage information;

a second field containing first high priority usage information; and

a third field containing second high priority usage information substantially

5 identical to said first high priority usage information.

17. The ink jet printer of claim 16, wherein said memory module includes a fourth field containing read-only information.

18. The ink jet printer of claim 17, wherein said memory module includes at least one checksum byte associated with said fourth field.

19. The ink jet printer of claim 16, wherein said memory module includes at least one checksum byte associated with at least one of said first field, said second field and said third field.

20. The ink jet printer of claim 19, wherein said at least one checksum byte contains data that is dependent upon at least one of said low priority usage information, said first high priority usage information and said second high priority usage information.

21. The ink jet printer of claim 16, wherein said third field defines a means of preventing said first high priority usage information from being lost if power to the printer is interrupted while said second field is being written to.

22. A method of storing usage information in an ink jet printer, said method comprising the steps of:

storing first usage information in a first memory field; and

5 storing second usage information in a second memory field, said second usage information being substantially identical to said first usage information.

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